

Unit 1: The Place of Indigenous Studies in the Curriculum

Indigenous Studies provides students at the University of Manitoba with a broad knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Studies courses help students better understand Indigenous issues of public interest discussed at the local, regional, and national levels. Through their involvement in Indigenous studies, you will increase your awareness and understanding of Indigenous Peoples' history, cultures, world views, and contributions in Canada and develop the skills necessary to discuss these issues.

Kulchyski (2000) defines Indigenous Studies as a practice of storytelling, buoyed by Eigenbrod's (2010) view that story is the very basis of the discipline. Indigenous research methods seek to be congruent methodologically with tribal knowledge, and the story actualizes this desire (Kovach, 2009). Brant (1994) stresses that Indigenous Studies offers a "new way to tell the stories we have always told" (p. 6). As a discipline, Indigenous Studies has been given the responsibility to share the lived experiences of Indigenous populations through both quantitative and qualitative research, so "the process of telling the story is as much the point as the story itself" (Absolon & Willett, 2005, as cited in McGregor et al., 2018). Kovach's (2017) work maintains that story builds community, expresses value, and demonstrates Indigenous research's relational and reflexive nature while adhering to protocol.

This course will also provide opportunities to enhance your problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, essential to continued study in post-secondary education, the world of work, and your role as an active Canadian citizen. By its very nature, Indigenous Studies is integrative or interdisciplinary. For example, when you examine the terms of a treaty negotiated by an Indigenous nation with the Crown (federal government), you combine Indigenous Studies, Political Sciences, Law, and History. Similarly, when you use the works of Indigenous writers to study the theme of renewal, you combine Indigenous Studies and English.

Unit 1: Terminology and Writing Guide

In this Indigenous studies course, you will examine the cultures and history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. What is currently Canada is the land of origin for Indigenous peoples, and the history of Canada begins with them. As the First Peoples of this land, Indigenous Peoples are unique and integral to Canada's mosaic. Thus, exploration of the development and contributions of Indigenous societies is central to understanding this country's social fabric.

The three Indigenous groups in Canada recognized by law (Constitution Act, 1982) are First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

First Nations

First Nations people appear on the Indian register (Indian Act) in Ottawa. Each person whose name appears on the Indian register is a registered Indian who has been assigned a registration number and is considered a Status Indian under the Indian Act. They may or may not belong to a band. Those who do not belong to a band are on a general list. Those who belong to a band have their name and number on a band list. The Indian Act applies only to these people. If registered Indian parents adopt a non-Aboriginal child, the child legally becomes an Indian. Since 1985, if one of the parents is not a Status Indian, the child has 6(2) status, a reduction from the 6(1) status granted to those with two Status Indian parents. People with 6(2) status cannot pass on Indian status if their

child has one non-status parent. Those who are not registered in Ottawa under the Indian Act are considered to be Non-Status Indians.

Inuit

The Inuit are recognized as Indigenous people and are registered in Ottawa, but the Indian Act does not apply to the Inuit. The Inuit do not have reserves. They have received Indigenous titles to the lands in the North that are recognized as belonging to them by the federal and territorial governments.

Many Inuit in Canada live in [53 communities across the northern regions of Canada in Inuit Nunangat](#), which means "the place where Inuit live."

Inuit Nunangat is comprised of 4 regions:

- Inuvialuit (Northwest Territories and Yukon)
- Nunavik (Northern Quebec)
- Nunatsiavut (Labrador)
- Nunavut

Métis

Métis are 1 of 3 recognized Indigenous peoples in Canada, along with First Nations and Inuit.

The Manitoba Métis Federation governs the Red River Métis, and citizens can be found throughout the Métis homeland.

The Métis National Council represents four other governing bodies also recognized by the Canadian government;

- Métis Nation Saskatchewan
- Métis Nation Ontario
- Métis Nation British Columbia
- Métis of Alberta

The Métis are recognized in the 1982 Canadian Constitution: "Section 35 (1) the existing Treaty and aboriginal rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed;" (2) In this Act, "aboriginal peoples of Canada" includes Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples.

Terminology and Writing Guide

Indigenous

The umbrella term used in Canada refers to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals. Internationally, it is a term that also refers to individuals who inhabited or existed on their land since time immemorial (i.e., Māori, Native Americans, *Sámi*, etc.)

First Nations

The term refers to an Indigenous person distinct from Métis or Inuit. The term originates in the 1970s and refers to those who are legally considered "Indians" in the Constitution Act 1982, s.35. In Manitoba, First Nation peoples include the *Néhiyaw*, Dakota (Assiniboine), Dakota,

Anishinaabe, Anishininew, and Dene (see the [Acknowledgement of the First Peoples of this land](#) section of the Katz et al. (2019) report for more information).

Métis

The term refers to an Indigenous person who self-identifies as Métis, is of the historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis nation. Under no circumstances would you use the term mixed or halfbreed to refer to the Métis.

Inuk

The term refers to an Indigenous person whose roots stem from Inuit Nunangat, also known as the Canadian Arctic. Inuit, which translates to people, can refer to more than one person. One would not write Inuit Peoples as it translates to People Peoples. Under no circumstances would you use the derogatory term Eskimo to refer to the Inuit.

Native American

The term refers to an Indigenous person whose roots stem from the United States of America and cannot be used to refer to Indigenous Peoples in what is now known as Canada.

Culturally Safe Writing Tips

- Always capitalize Indigenous
- Pluralize ‘people’ as there is no one homogenous group of Indigenous
- Use active language, avoiding passive voice
- Avoid past-tense Indigenous peoples are here in the present
- Avoid possessive terms
- Use Indigenous names and spellings for Indigenous peoples (i.e., *néhiyaw* for colonially known Cree, Anishinaabe for colonially known Ojibwe, etc.)

Terms to Avoid

Indian

The term used by the Canadian Nation-State in government policy (i.e., Indian Act, Status Indian, etc.). The term is rooted in colonialism and racism. According to the Canadian government, it refers to First Nations entitled to registration under the Indian Act. You would use this term only in a historical reference or when discussing a legal document.

Native

The term is outdated and considered in the community as derogatory.

Our Native People/ Native Canadian/ Indigenous Canadian

These terms imply that Indigenous people are the property of Canada or belong to Canada. Please do not use them. Indigenous people belong to their sovereign nations and have their own governments. All Indigenous peoples have lived in Canada longer than the creation of the Canadian Nation State; therefore, they are not Indigenous to Canada.

Aboriginal

The Canadian Constitution Act of 1982 uses the term to describe the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, whose rights are recognized and affirmed within the document. Although used in a legal

context in your work when not referring specifically to s.35 of the constitution or government policy, avoid using this term.

Aborigines

A derogatory term refers to an Indigenous person whose roots stem from the land currently known as Australia and cannot be used to refer to Indigenous Peoples in what is now known as Canada.

Unit 2: Distribution and Ecozones

How many people were there?

In the pre-contact era, before Europeans began sailing across the Atlantic Ocean for a route to Asia, Indigenous peoples were distributed unevenly across the Canadian landscape. Most scholars will agree that population density varies according to the ability of the lands to support human life. However, this is where the agreement ends, with the size of Canada's Indigenous population continuing to be a disputed and debated issue today. Thornton (1987), using a procedure called "standard hemispheric depopulation ratio," has estimated the population to be slightly more than 2 million, while Mooney (1928) estimates Canada's population to be close to 200,000 based on tribe-by-tribe estimates from historical materials. Kroeber (1963) takes an environmental carrying capacity approach to reach a similar number, while 500,000 is now accepted by Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Health, derived from averaging low and high estimates. These estimates have yet to be determined using methods rigorous enough to be considered credible by the scientific community, which is why the debate continues. But, there is no debate on another claim, as scholars can all agree: the Indigenous population decreased dramatically after the arrival of the Europeans.

Who were the original inhabitants of Canada?

One way to look at the traditional cultures of Indigenous peoples is to consider the cultural areas they inhabited before contact with Europeans. A cultural area is a geographic region where people share similar cultural traits. Canada's first inhabitants can be divided into two cultural groups, the First Nations Peoples and the Inuit, and within these two groups, subdivided further based on minor divisions of geographic areas and culture. All Indigenous groups had their own unique cultures long before contact with Europeans, and current media often makes the mistake of lumping all Indigenous people together. You will see many different cultural groups within the blanket terms we refer to as First Nations or Inuit. Remember that culture refers to the ways of life people share, language, food, clothes, tools, religion, government, and artistic expression, as we explore these characteristics in more detail throughout this unit.

Interactive Map

Arctic Cultures

Subarctic Cultures

Northwest Coast Cultures

Plateau Cultures

Plains Cultures

Eastern Woodlands Cultures

The First Nations Peoples

First Nations peoples inhabited five different cultural areas throughout the regions known today as Canada. The five major cultural areas were the Subarctic, Northwest Coast, Plateau, Plains, and Northeastern Woodlands. Each region offered different natural resources and a variety of climates to the people who lived there. Different First Nations within each culture area adopted similar ways of life—similar cultures—because they lived within similar conditions. However, the many different First Nations peoples spoke more than 50 languages and lived diverse lifestyles shaped by their particular environment.

Although different, most First Nations languages within a culture area were part of a language family. A language family is a group of languages that have all developed from one common language in the past, called a proto-language.

Unifying Factors contributing to First Nations Culture: Oral History, Spirituality, and Ceremony

All First Nations told stories orally to preserve their people's knowledge, experiences, and beliefs. These stories are still told today. They make up each nation's oral history. Storytellers tell stories about actual events in the history of a nation and teach lessons about everyday life.

Oral histories also enabled First Nations to pass down religious and spiritual knowledge through the generations for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Shamans were the guardians of this religious knowledge—the mythologies and ceremonies. Religious and spiritual ceremonies were rich and diverse among First Nations. Shamans often presided over these ceremonies, examples of which were the sundance of Plains nations, winter ceremonies of Northwest Coast nations, and shaking tent ceremonies of Subarctic nations.

One example of an individual's spirituality was the vision quest. Before or at puberty, a young person would go alone to a wilderness area to fast and meditate. The purpose was for the young person to receive a vision or a dream. They sought to gain a guardian spirit power to support and protect them through life.

Though the religious beliefs and ceremonies among First Nations were varied, some ideas were shared among most First Nations—ideas that are still held today. One example is The Great Spirit or Creator who created Earth and everything on it. Storytellers passed down many different creation stories. For example, many creation stories describe the Great Spirit diving into the ancient water to dig up mud, from which he made the Earth. Other creation stories might involve a changeling or transformer (Nanabooshoo in Anishinaabe or Wesakechak in Nehiyaw) who takes light, fire, water, food, animals, and people. The Trickster sets all these elements loose, which creates the world as it is now.

All living and non-living things the Creator made are interrelated in a great circle of life. Because each thing on Earth has a spirit, it should be respected and cared for. For example, when taking the life of a plant or animal, a First Nations person pays respect to its spirit. First Nations hunters greatly respect and are grateful to the animals they kill for human survival. Hunters offer or burn tobacco to acknowledge this gift of animal life.

Inuit

Inuit and their ancestors are the Indigenous peoples who lived in the Arctic for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. The Arctic is a vast region that is north of the Arctic Circle. The Inuit developed ways of life that were highly adapted to the harsh Arctic environment. Like First Nations people, the borders of what is now Canada did not apply to Inuit cultural groups. The Inuit can be subdivided into eight distinct cultural groups: Labrador, Ungava, Baffin Island, Iglulik, Caribou, Netsilik, Mackenzie, and Copper Inuit peoples, based on geographic location.

Although all Inuit people at this time spoke the same language—Inuktitut—each group spoke a different dialect. Most of these Inuit groups still exist today, and many Inuit still live in the traditional Arctic areas in which their ancestors lived.

Unifying Factors contributing to Inuit Culture: Cooperation, Resourcefulness, and Oral history

Although there are variations in landforms and climate throughout the Arctic, some aspects of the environment are similar throughout the Arctic region. For example, Arctic winters are long and extremely cold, with few hours of daylight. Summers are relatively short but with many hours of daylight and moderate temperatures. No trees grow in the Arctic, but there are low, shrubby plants, many of which produce edible berries. These factors affected the evolution of culture for all Inuit groups who lived throughout the Arctic region.

The Inuit lived in small bands comprised of two to five families. Close cooperation and sharing among families was critical in Inuit life because it was necessary for survival in such a harsh climate. Hunting was often a collaborative activity, where many men would work together to catch larger game, and the catch would be distributed evenly throughout the band. If one family were in difficulty, either more resources would be given to them, or children would be re-distributed to other band members until difficulties were overcome. If an elder felt they could no longer contribute to the band, they would wander away from the group to die on the land rather than consume the hard-won resources of the group.

Because of the scarcity of resources, nothing could be wasted, and everything available in the environment was used. One of the most iconic examples of this is the igloo. The snow-house style of igloo—today considered a major technological success—was made from blocks of packed snow (not ice) and built into a dome. It might hold up to 20 people. Long tunnel entrances provided storage space; the entrance tunnel opened into the house below floor level. Inside would be cooking pots, oil lamps, and low platforms for sleeping and sitting. Some Inuit lined the walls with caribou skins for insulation. Some snow houses even had a window set in the roof made of clear lake ice. Some groups would live in snow houses through the winter.

In contrast, others, such as the Labrador Inuit, might live in a different style of igloo—houses built partly underground made of driftwood, sod, stone, and whalebone, depending on what was available. In summer, or when there was too little snow or ice to build a snow house, Inuit lived in tents made of animal skins. The tents were weighted down around the edges by rocks.

The Inuit depended on hunting and fishing; hunger and starvation were common when fish and game were not plentiful. Meat and fish caught in summer were stored in shallow pits dug down to permafrost and covered with stones to keep out hungry animals. Because there was little wood in the Arctic to make fires, meat, and fish were often eaten raw. The skins of seals or caribou were

used for everything from the construction of boats (umiaks and kayaks) to shoes (mukluks or kamiks), trousers, and parkas. Different skins were used for seasonal clothing based on insulating and water-resistant characteristics.

An individual's story might have been recorded on the decorations of a parka, and carving—an ancient art still practiced today also served to record and share stories. Inuit carved tools, weapons, and objects of art. Bone, ivory, wood, and soapstone (soft stone) were used to make small figures of people and animals. Tools were carefully carved to fit the hand of the user. In western areas of the Arctic, masks were carved of wood, painted, and decorated with feathers and animal skins.

Inuit had a close spiritual relationship with the natural world around them, passed down through oral tradition. There were no gods, but the cosmos were filled with souls of humans, animals, spirits, and inanimate objects. Inuit also believed in other worlds beneath the sea, inside the Earth, and the sky. Angakoks, or shamans, were thought to be able to travel in trances and dreams to these other worlds and communicate with souls. Stories told of shamans visiting these worlds, transforming into animals, and visiting Sedna—the half-woman, half-fish goddess of all sea creatures. In each new hunting season, pieces of the liver of the first killed sea mammal were returned to the water to please Sedna to give up her sea creatures to the hunters so that the people would have food.

Unit 3: Perspectives on First Contact

Conclusion:

It is challenging to characterize first encounters because no single pattern emerges from descriptions. First encounters could have occurred between groups with no former knowledge of each other, or the participants from these encounters may have been biased at first contact based on hearsay of the other groups.

Outside of the Norse, the first meetings along the east coast were originally between European fishermen and indigenous populations when the fisherman had decided to dry fish onshore. These early encounters usually included some barter as the fisherman dabbled in furs and Indigenous populations sought European items. A key protocol that was realized from these early relationships was the giving of gifts. This practice was not simply about providing gifts but, more importantly, was about social and diplomatic obligations.

Differences in European and Indigenous worldviews were readily apparent in the early contact period. For example, in general terms, Europeans were convinced that humans were the controlling force of the universe, while Indigenous peoples viewed humans as part of the universe. In regards to land, Europeans viewed land as private property to be owned by individuals, whereas Indigenous peoples viewed land as a resource that existed for the benefit of all. The Wendat and the Haudenosaunee lived in confederacies, which were useful for trade among Indigenous groups. Still, as we will see, these confederacies were undermined by a rivalry between these nations after exposure to European trade.

The First Explorers:

Leif Erikson

About the year 1000, the Viking Leif Erikson sailed from Greenland (the island discovered by his father, Erik the Red) and explored the east coast of Canada, naming the area of Newfoundland and Labrador 'Markland.' Archaeologists excavating at L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland, found the remains of buildings and Norse artifacts proving there was a settlement. However, no one knows who or for how long—another 500 years passed before any permanent European settlements on the continent.



Image source: Cadeau, C. (2015) Leif Erikson and Viking in Canada.

[Image] <https://cdnhistorybits.wordpress.com/2015/12/08/leif-erikson-vikings-canada/>

Christopher Columbus

Despite never setting foot on the mainland of Turtle Island, also known as North America, Columbus was touted as the man who discovered North America. This has been debunked in recent years, with many cities changing Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. Instead, Columbus and his crew were the first Europeans to see the Bahamas archipelago (present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic). On his subsequent voyages, he went farther south, to Central and South America.

John Cabot

An Italian, Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot), wanted to look for a route to Asia north of the route taken by Columbus. He won the backing of English merchants and King Henry VII. In May 1497, Cabot left Bristol, England, with a crew 18, including his three sons. On June 24, they reached land and claimed it for England. It was probably Newfoundland or Cape Breton in what is now Canada. This is the first known landing of Europeans in North America since the Viking Lief Erikson 500 years earlier.

After exploring the coast for about a month, Cabot returned to England to much acclaim. He reported that they had reached Asia. He and his men also reported an abundance of fish in the waters of the new land. The king was impressed enough to fund a second trip with five ships and 300 men the following year, but Cabot never returned. It is not known what happened to Cabot or

the ships. Cabot's first voyage became the basis of the English claim to North America, and the reports of fish triggered the annual spring voyage across the ocean of European fishing ships and whalers.

Others followed, such as Portuguese explorer Gaspar Cortes-Real, who claimed Newfoundland and Labrador for Portugal in 1500. João Alvares Fagundus, also Portuguese, explored the same coast in 1521. Italian Giovanni du Verrazanno claimed land further south for France in 1524 and called it Arcadia. These explorers were all looking for a route to Asia. Most expeditions were funded in part by merchants looking for trade opportunities.

Jacques Cartier

Like many explorers who sailed to America, the French explorer Jacques Cartier hoped to find a route through the continent to Asia. He did not find a route, but Cartier was the first recorded European to explore the St. Lawrence River during the three expeditions he led. He was also one of the first Europeans to attempt a settlement in what is now Canada.

Cartier's First Voyage - 1534

In 1534, King Francis I of France sent Cartier to search for a northwest passage. Cartier sailed into what became known as the Gulf of St. Lawrence through the Strait of Belle Isle. He and his men explored the coasts of what are now Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick, naming points as they traveled. In Chaleur Bay, they were approached by Mi'kmaq, who indicated that they wanted to trade their furs. They were likely accustomed to trading with the crew of European fishing ships. Outnumbered by the Mi'kmaq, Cartier was initially reluctant to deal with them and fired cannon shots over their heads. However, the next day, he and his men went ashore to trade knives and tools for their furs.

While on what became known as the Gaspé Peninsula, Cartier had a friendly encounter with a fishing party of Haudenosaunee (Iroquois). They were from the village of Stadacona, near the present-day city of Quebec. Before leaving to return to France, Cartier erected a cross and claimed the land for King Francis I. This did not sit well with the Stadacona. Chief Donnacona and his sons paddled a canoe out to Cartier's ship to inform them that he disapproved. Cartier indicated through sign language that the cross was a marker to help him find his way back to that location. Possibly, this satisfied the Donnacona because Cartier took the chief's two sons, Domagaya and

Taignoagny, with him to France.

Cartier's Second Voyage – 1535

Cartier did return in 1535 with Domagaya and Taignoagny to navigate the ship up a great river to "Kanata," their word for village. Cartier and his crew were likely the first Europeans to sail up what

he called the rivière de Canada (St. Lawrence). Donnacona was happy to have his sons back and welcomed them with a feast. However, he discouraged further exploration up the river that Cartier and King Francis hoped would lead to the Pacific or gold.

Regardless, Cartier carried on up the river as far as the Haudenosaunee village of Hochelaga, where they were welcomed, but communication could have been better. Cartier understood that gold, silver, and copper could be found by following another river north of St. Lawrence. Since rapids blocked the St. Lawrence, Cartier climbed a steep hill to look at the other river. He named the hill Mont Réal (Mount Royal), and today, the city of Montreal stands on this site.

Cartier returned to Stadacona in October, where his men were building a small fort. It was a cold winter with no fresh fruits or vegetables, and most men got sick from scurvy. Though relations with the Stadacona were strained, Cartier finally learned from them how to brew tea from white cedar as a cure, but it was too late for the 25 men who died. Cartier had to leave one ship behind when he returned to France the following spring. However, he took 10 of the Stadacona with him, including

Donnacona. All but one of the 10 Haudenosaunees died in England before his next voyage.

Cartier's Last Voyage - 1541

Cartier had yet to find a northwest passage to Asia, but the Haudenosaunee reports of gold and silver caught the king's attention. Cartier was sent back in 1541 to establish a settlement on the river to ensure France's claim to the land and any possible riches. An expedition of 10 ships was planned to be led by Jean-François de la Rocque de Roberval, with Cartier as navigator. Roberval's ship was not ready, but Cartier set sail on schedule.

The Stadacona did not welcome the French this time, so Cartier built a fort downriver at a place he named Charlesbourg-Royal. Once again, the winter was cold, and there was hostility with the Stadacona, who no longer trusted the French. At least 35 of the men died or were killed. Despite orders to establish a settlement, Cartier and the surviving men returned to France in the spring with what they thought were gold and diamonds. The "gold" and "diamonds" proved worthless iron pyrite and quartz. Cartier never returned to North America, but his exploration helped to establish European knowledge of the geography of the land, and he gave many place names to European mapmakers, including the name Canada.

Samuel de Champlain

Samuel de Champlain was a French explorer, colonist, and mapmaker. His sketches and books provide a vivid picture of his travels in the land that became Canada and the lives of the First Nations. Often called the "Father of New France," Champlain founded the city of Quebec in 1608. He was primarily responsible for its success as a colony and France's claim in North America.

Port Royal

Champlain first visited Canada in 1603 as a passenger on a trading ship that stopped in Tadoussac and then went on to the site of Montreal. The following year, he accompanied Pierre Du Gua de Monts and about 80 settlers to Acadia to establish a colony. De Monts had been granted a trade

monopoly in New France. They explored what became known as the Bay of Fundy for a temporary site and chose the island of St. Croix. It was a disastrous winter. Many of the settlers died from scurvy, and they burned all the trees on the island for heat. In the spring, the settlement moved across the bay to a place they named Port Royal (Annapolis Royal).

More settlers came from France in 1605, and the Port Royal colony survived. They grew some food but relied on the ships that came each spring for supplies. Champlain spent much of his time in Acadia exploring and mapping the Atlantic coast from Port Royal to Cape Cod. To bolster spirits during the winter of 1606, he began a club named the Order of Good Cheer. The men were encouraged to outdo each other in planning elaborate meals and festivities. However, when de Monts' trade monopoly was canceled in 1607, most settlers returned to France.

Quebec

In 1608, de Monts sent Champlain to establish a fur trading post and colony inland on the St. Lawrence River. Champlain chose the site of the abandoned Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) village of Stadacona, which provided access to the interior via the river and a good vantage point for controlling trade. No one knows what happened to the Haudenosaunee. Possibly, warfare or European diseases brought by Cartier wiped out the villages north of the river. Champlain called this settlement Quebec from the Algonkian word "kebec," meaning where the river narrows. The workmen Champlain had brought with him spent the summer building the "Habitation of Quebec." Champlain spent the rest of his life trying to get financial support for the future capital of New France and this first permanent French settlement in New France.

Champlain quickly developed trade relationships with the Innu (Montagnais), who had been traveling to Tadoussac to trade with the French. To build and maintain these trading relationships, he joined the Innu and their First Nations allies in raids on their enemies, the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois). For many years, there had been ongoing warfare between two alliances of First Nations: the League of Five Nations Haudenosaunee Confederacy with their allies living south of St. Lawrence and the Ouendat (Huron) Confederacy with their allies, including the Innu and the Kichesiprini (Algonquin) living north of St. Lawrence.

In 1609, Champlain accompanied a war party of Innu, Kichesiprini, and Ouendat up what is now the Richelieu River to a lake named Lake Champlain. Champlain helped his allies defeat the Iroquois, who had never seen European guns before. This success cemented the French alliances. However, it made enemies of the Haudenosaunee, who soon developed alliances and trading relationships with the Dutch, who settled on the Hudson and, ultimately, the British in New England.

Champlain spent the winter of 1609–1610 in France, working with de Monts to secure financial support for Quebec from French merchants. On his return, he joined another war party against the Haudenosaunee, who were once again defeated on the Richelieu River. Also that year, he sent Étienne Brûlée to live with the Ouendat to learn their language and customs. This strategy was designed to build bonds between the Ouendat and the French, and other young men followed. Champlain's relationship with the Ouendat grew stronger over the next few years as he traveled with them, exploring most of the Great Lakes area and raiding the Haudenosaunee.

Henri de Bourbon, Prince de Condé assumed responsibility for New France in 1612. He confirmed Champlain as his lieutenant in New France, which increased Champlain's powers to those of a governor. Though he was not given the title of governor, Champlain was no longer just the agent of a

fur trading company. The king reminded him of the importance of the search for valuable minerals and a route through the continent. In 1613, Champlain traveled north up the river Cartier had seen from Mont Réal, which became known as the Ottawa River. His mission was to convince the Kichesiprini to come to the rapids to trade with the French. On this trip, he lost his astrolabe while portaging. It was discovered in 1867 and is in the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Also, in 1613, Champlain's book *Voyages* and a detailed map of New France was published.

Two years later, Champlain accompanied a party of Ouendat up the Ottawa River to Lake Nipissing and their territory on what became known as Lake Huron. He had traveled the route that was to become the main highway of the fur trade as the population of fur-bearing animals declined in the St. Lawrence region from too much trapping.

While visiting with the Ouendat, he joined a war party in an attack on the Oneida and Onondaga of the Haudenosaunee League in their lands at the eastern end of Lake Ontario. They traveled down what are now Lake Simcoe and the Trent River. An attack on a fortified Haudenosaunee village was futile. Champlain was wounded in the leg and spent the winter with the Ouendat while he healed. During this time, he learned much from them about their culture and the geography of the land.

Champlain's exploring days were over, but he had acquired a working knowledge of the leading First Nations' trade routes from Acadia to the Great Lakes. He devoted himself to developing the colony, and his efforts included bringing four Recollet priests to try to convert the First Nations peoples to Christianity. In 1618, he submitted a plan to King Louis XIII for developing farming, mining, and forestry and requested families, soldiers, and priests be sent from France. Champlain believed developing colonies to protect French interests from the Dutch and English was essential. His constant efforts to get support for the struggling colony were rewarded in 1627. Cardinal Richelieu organized the Company of 100 Associates to promote colonization and the fur trade.

However, in 1628, Quebec was threatened by David Kirke, an English privateer who intercepted ships with settlers and supplies sent to Quebec by the company. Champlain was forced to surrender his starved-out post to the English privateers the following year. However, thanks partly to Champlain's efforts, Quebec was restored to France by the Treaty of St.-Germain-en-Laye in 1632. Champlain devoted his few remaining years to rebuilding Quebec, which had fallen into ruins under the English fur traders.

When Champlain died in Quebec in 1635, only 150 settlers lived there. However, Champlain's fur trade network had laid solid foundations for the French empire in North America.

The Complexity of Relationships

French Expansion

After winning a series of wars on the European continent, King Louis XIV turned his attention to France's overseas colonies' problems. In 1663, he made New France a province of France and appointed a governor and an intendant (business manager) to oversee provincial affairs. Troops were sent to subdue the Haudenosaunee. Then, the king and his advisor, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, focused on building the colony. The king granted large pieces of land along the St. Lawrence to seigneurs (landlords), who rented portions out to habitants (settlers). By 1672, more than 6,000 French lived in New France. King Louis did not consider the First Nations' claims to the land.

The fur trade revived, and westward expansion increased. French explorers and traders pushed beyond the Great Lakes. To the southwest, Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet explored the Mississippi River, traveling as far south as the Arkansas River. The Sieur de la Salle Robert Cavelier opened the Ohio and Illinois country and then went on to find the mouth of the Mississippi River in 1682. New posts were built as far west as Fort Frontenac (Kingston) and present-day Niagara on Lake Ontario. By 1700, the French had built a mighty inland empire stretching from present-day Quebec to the Gulf of Mexico.

The development of relationships played an essential role in this expansion. Cartier's voyages and travels up St. Lawrence to Hochelaga are traced in your readings, along with an outline of his eventual kidnapping of Donnacona and his two sons. Samuel de Champlain chose a different strategy for approaching First Nations peoples by developing a trading relationship with the Innu. As a result of this alliance, the Innu could control the early fur trade, and Tadoussac became the center of the Gulf of St. Lawrence trade. The existing relationships were not without problems, and the friction had ramifications for Indigenous peoples and the French. The friction ranged from confrontations involving death to minor misunderstandings viewed as insults because either a particular protocol was not followed or expectations were unclear.

Once the French had moved further inland, formed a new trading partnership with the Ouendat, and established Montreal, the importance of the Innu and Tadoussac diminished. As the French expanded their control in North America, they looked at New France and Acadia as trading outposts and colonies. That viewpoint was reinforced by France's belief that they owned these areas by right of discovery and that the Indigenous populations were, at best, French subjects. This, of course, allowed the French to discount any semblance of Indigenous sovereignty.

Disruption of pre-established relationships

By then, the Ouendat (Huron) Nation along the St. Lawrence River had already developed a trading system. They knew that the more furs they could provide the Europeans, the more hatchets, iron fishhooks, and other goods they would receive in exchange. So, the Ouendat expanded their trade system and acted as trade agents between the Europeans and the First Nations living farther west.

With the center of the St. Lawrence trade being established at Montreal, the Ouendat, and the French, she entered into an alliance that would have lasting impacts on the region. Before the arrival of the French, the Huron had been allied with the Innu, Anishnabek, and Mi'kmaq against the Five Nations. The French alliance with the Ouendat made them immediate enemies with the Five Nations. In addition to a trading relationship, Champlain insisted that the relationship between the

French and the Ouendat be one of conversion, making it clear that without missionary involvement, there would be no trade. The influence of the missionaries went far beyond attempts at conversion and resulted in the deaths of many Ouendat; it is believed the missionaries unknowingly spread European diseases, such as smallpox, among the Ouendat.

Realizing the importance of access to European trade goods, the Five Nations established trading relationships with the Dutch and English and, for a time, played the two European nations off against each other. In the 1640s, the Five Nations—especially the Kanien'kehá:ka and Onandowaga—began blockades of the St. Lawrence, stopping the Ouendat and French from moving furs. As the situation intensified, the Iroquois moved from attacking trade convoys to attacking settlements. As a result of these intensified attacks and the devastation from disease, the Huron dispersed from their territory and joined other nations that accepted them.

English Expansion

The impact of the dispersal of the Ouendat included a change in the geographic concentration of the fur trade and a more significant influence of the British. This geographical shift was to more northern and westerly locals, paving the way for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) to prominence. The HBC realized that an alliance with the néhinaw or néhiyaw (Cree) was essential to the trade's success, so they tried cultivating a relationship. The French also saw opportunities in the fur trade in the West, so they tried to establish good relationships with the néhinaw or néhiyaw and other groups in the West. As a result, the various Indigenous nations became very good at taking advantage of European interests in alliance and friendship.

Conclusion:

The fur trade was an in-land business that would eventually see Europeans push far into the North American West to the Pacific Ocean. The fur-bearing animals of Europe had grown scarce, and Europeans saw North American animals (beaver, otter, deer, bear, and fox) as treasures. Beaver pelts were in high demand at that time for fashionable European hats. Many Indigenous peoples (not all) wanted to trade with Europeans—furs for metal tools (utensils, knives, and axe heads) and other European goods. Europeans needed the help of the Indigenous peoples to get the furs. Indigenous peoples were skilled at trapping these animals, so Europeans and Indigenous peoples cooperated to build and sustain the fur trade. The trade expanded significantly through the 16th century, and in 1608, Samuel de Champlain founded Quebec City as a fur trade post with immediate consequences for Indigenous people. This period of history is marked with misunderstandings, misaligned expectations, and complex relationships as fur trade company rivalries jostled for control of trade routes and territories.

Effects of Fur Trade

Christianization

At the same time that the fur trade was getting underway, Christian missionaries were also seeking good relations with Indigenous peoples. The missionaries' goal was not commercial; they wished to

convert Indigenous peoples to Christianity. Early on, the fur trade aided missionaries in developing the good relations needed to teach Indigenous peoples about Christian beliefs. The Ouendat (Huron) accepted Jesuit priests into their communities. This helped to ease trade relations with Europeans. European traders were less likely to mistreat Ouendat fur traders at the market if a Jesuit priest accompanied them.

These early relationships between missionaries and Aboriginal peoples opened the door to their Christianization. Over time, many Indigenous peoples converted to Christianity and its belief system in place of the traditional beliefs their peoples had developed and held for thousands of years.

Intermarriage

The cooperative nature of the fur trade took European traders deep into Indigenous peoples' communities. One result of this was the marriage of European men and Indigenous women. When a European man wanted to court and marry an Indigenous woman, he had to follow the customs of her people's culture. These marriages, in time, led to the development of a new nation—the Métis. However, it would not be until 1982 that the government of Canada would formally recognize the Métis as an Indigenous people.

Armed Conflict

The fur trade caused conflict among some First Nations to protect their trade interests. For example, the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy) attacked and nearly wiped out the Ouendat (Huron) in the 1640s. The surviving Ouendat people dispersed into other regions and took refuge with other First Nations.

Later, some First Nations fought in European conflicts. European powers vied for control of the lands that would become Canada. French and English sought Aboriginal allies because they were regarded as strong and capable warriors. Not all First Nations were drawn into these conflicts. Those who chose to fight with a European nation did so to protect their lands. First Nations tended to side with the European power that would sustain the fur trade but not settle land for agriculture. European agricultural settlements encroached on traditional Indigenous lands.

Over Trapping

Another effect of the fur trade industry was the over-trapping of animals—some near extinction. For centuries, Indigenous peoples had trapped and hunted animals sustainably. However, the fur trade became such an essential part of the Indigenous and European economies that the animals were over-trapped in a non-sustainable way. When the animal populations fell in a particular region, there were too few animals to sustain trade, let alone the basic food needs of Indigenous peoples. This often led to Indigenous peoples becoming dependent on Europeans to help them with basic survival.

For the Métis and plains First Nations, over-trapping was not so much a problem as over-hunting of buffalo. There was a substantial European industrial demand for buffalo hides in the 19th century. Métis and Plains First Nations hunted buffalo to serve this market. Buffalo were also hunted for sport and food in the United States. The herds of migrating buffalo north and south of the border

were nearly wiped out. This forced the Métis and Plains First Nations to abandon their traditional ways of life and find new means of survival.

Disease

One of the most devastating effects of contact and the development of the fur trade between Indigenous peoples and Europeans was epidemic infectious disease. Europeans carried diseases to which Indigenous peoples had little or no natural immunity. These diseases were transmitted to Aboriginal populations through fur trading posts: smallpox, influenza, measles, and other diseases sickened and killed thousands of Indigenous peoples. For example, one-third and one-half of all Ouendat (Huron) people died of disease in the 1600s. Other examples include epidemics throughout the 1700s in the western interior, where half of the Dene Suliné (Chipewyan) First Nation was killed and the entire Michele First Nation was wiped out. Epidemics occurred farther west towards the Pacific coast through the 1800s. The Inuit were also not immune, with the disease being a suspected contributor to the disappearance of the Mackenzie Inuit as well.

Expansion of European Society

By the 18th century, the fur trade was extended into the prairies. Eventually, the North West Company (NWC) established a fur trade post at Fort Gibraltar at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers in Winnipeg. The French voyageurs of the North West Company, who crewed the big canoes, began to marry Indigenous women and live year-round in the area. The children of these marriages (later referred to as either Bois Brules or Métis) learned from their Indigenous families to hunt the buffalo and prepare pemmican, the staple food of the fur trade. Their European fathers taught them the European farming style and how to build and use the big ox-driven carts they utilized to carry large loads of pemmican from the hunt to their homes. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were several thousand Métis, most around present-day southern Manitoba. Eventually, these Métis people would develop a sense of nationhood based on their distinct culture and economic independence based on their primary occupation - the pemmican trade.

The North West Company eventually became a significant force in the fur trade between the 1780s and 1821. Managed primarily by Highland Scots who migrated to Montréal after 1760 or came as Loyalists escaping the American Revolution, it also drew heavily on Canadian labor and experience. The name first described Montréal traders who, in 1776, pooled resources to reduce competition and resist the inland advances of the Hudson's Bay Company. The NWC and the Hudson's Bay Company became bitter rivals, and several confrontations ensued.

For instance, From 1803 to 1806, the Nor'Westers maintained a base in HBC territory on James Bay, and although this enterprise proved unprofitable, the rivalry intensified elsewhere. Costly clashes at the Red River Colony, Fort William, and the Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan River. This rivalry impaired both companies' abilities and profit; by 1820, strong forces were building toward resolving the conflict. In 1821, both companies merged into one entity – called the Hudson's Bay Company. The HBC, after 1821, as a monopoly, enjoyed significant profits throughout what is now Canada. By 1870, the HBC's vast territory in the West was transferred to Canada, and a trickle of settlers coming from Ontario became a flood. As settlement spread north and west, the HBC and rival free traders intensified the trade's northward push, eventually establishing enduring trading contacts with the Inuit.

Fur trade and the Inuit

The fur trade lasted much longer for Inuit in the Canadian Arctic than it had in any other region of Canada. For Inuit, the trade continued well into the 20th century. The fur trade affected Inuit culture. For example, it brought them European tools for conducting their hunts—guns and motorboats. Inuit also adopted many other European goods, such as store-bought clothing and food, into their way of life. In addition, Christian missionaries had followed close behind the European traders, converting almost all Inuit to Christianity by 1940.

Despite the changes in the fur trade and European contact, the traditional Inuit way of life—semi-nomadic living in hunting and trapping camps—remained intact. This way of life continued for a long time after contact because the Canadian government had had little interest in developing the far north for economic or military purposes. Once the government changed its policy, it set up centralized living areas throughout the Arctic. The government encouraged the Inuit to live in those centers. As a result, the Inuit semi-nomadic way of life was virtually gone by the 1960s and 70s.

Black Fur Traders

Academics and institutions have silenced parts of our collective histories throughout Canadian history. The experiences of Black historical figures are often omitted from the history books. We will take a moment to acknowledge two Black fur traders' presence and history. Individuals like Glasgow Crawford worked with the Hudson's Bay Company, Pierre Bongo, and Joseph Lewis.

Joseph Lewis

Known by many spellings of his surname (Lewis, Louis, or Lewes), he traveled north from the United States to Montreal. His job in the fur trade was working for the North West Company. The records indicate he signed a three-year contract with the Hudson's Bay Company stationed at multiple posts, including Greenwich House, Jack River House, and Bolsover House. During recent Black History Month in Edmonton, Joseph Lewis is celebrated as one of the first Black people to come to the area. Lewis participated in an expedition, the first of its kind, over the Rocky Mountains in 1810.

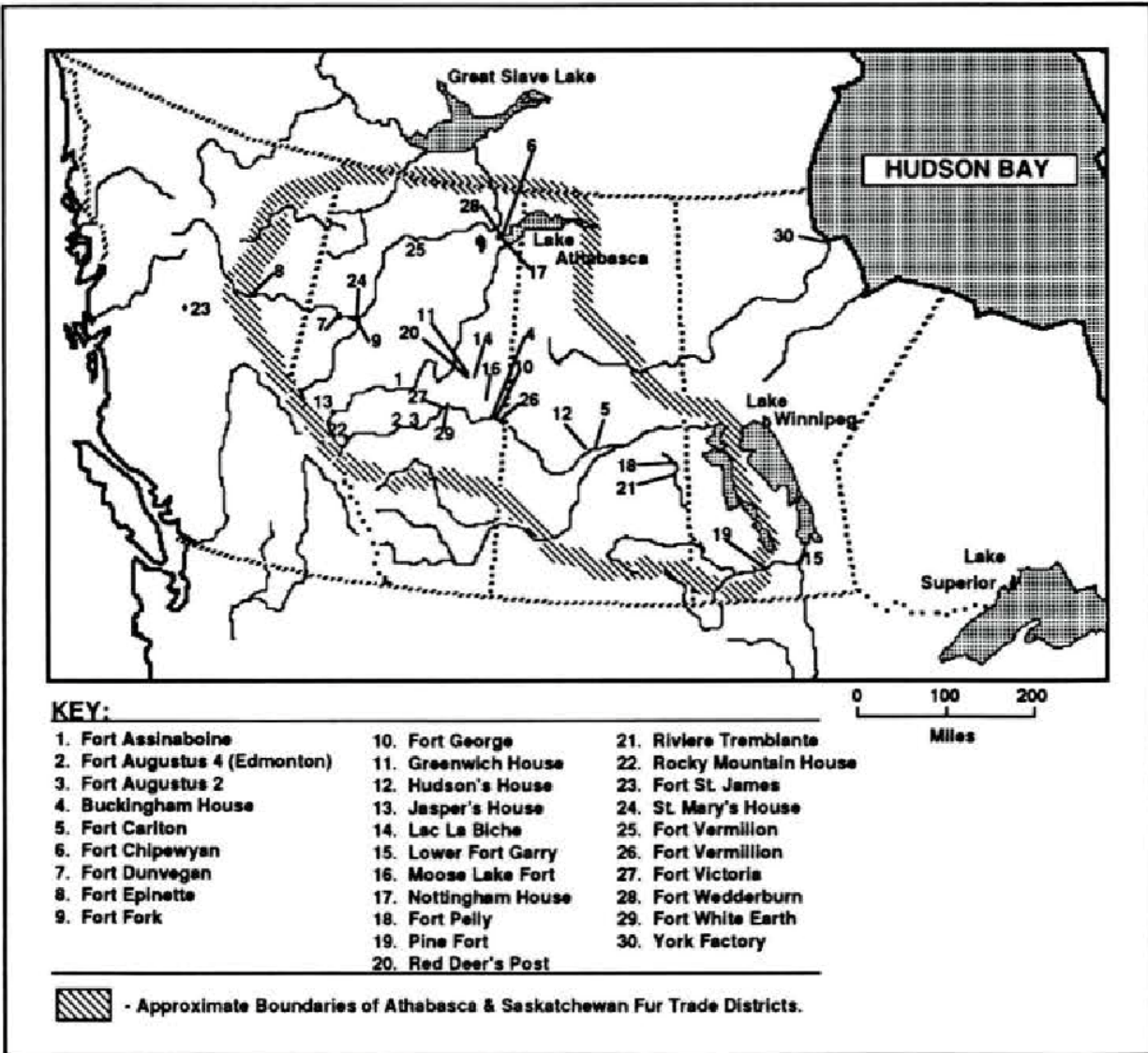


Image Source: Pyszczuk, H., (1992) The Architecture of the Western Canadian Fur Trade: A Cultural-Historical Perspective

First Nations women are also subject to erasure in the history books. Lewis was recorded to have been married to a First Nations woman, but there is no record of her name. The two had three children together, and he retired in 1814 to do freelance work on the Prairies. His children would settle in the Red River area and marry into the Manitoba Metis Community.

George Bonga

The Bonga family also had numerous spellings in the history books (Bungo, Bonza, or Bongo). In the 19th century, Bongo was a fur trader of both Native American and Black ancestry. Born in 1802 in Duluth, Minnesota, his parents were Pierre Bongo, a fur trader and a Native American woman from the Ojibwe Nation Ojibwayquay. He spoke multiple languages, including French, English, and

several Indigenous languages. He served as an interpreter in Indian-U.S negotiations and also worked for the American Fur Trading Company before creating his trading post.

Watch this short YouTube to learn more about George Bonga

George Bonga: A Black Pioneer In Minnesota



Image: Public Domain

To learn more about the Black experiences in Canada, check out this edited collection;

Johnson, M. A., & Aladejebi, F. (Eds.). (2022). *Unsettling the great white north: Black Canadian history*. University of Toronto Press.

